

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR
6 November 1975

Congress eyes postal-inspection policy

By the Associated Press

Washington
Congress is beginning to scrutinize the activities of the Postal Service's inspection agency as a result of revelations that mail was opened illegally by the FBI and CIA.

A House Post Office subcommittee called chief postal inspector C. Neil Benson to answer questions Nov. 5 on what he plans to do to secure the mail in the future.

Mr. Benson testified he "could not conceive" of any repetition of illegal CIA and FBI mail-opening programs.

"If I were contacted by the CIA or any other law-enforcement agency about opening mail, I would decline to do so," Inspector Benson told the subcommittee.

"It would not matter what the circumstances were, even if it was a national security matter, I don't have the authority under the law to open mail," he said.

Mr. Benson became head of the Postal Inspection Service in August after it was disclosed that the CIA and FBI opened mail illegally. The Justice Department reportedly is considering prosecution of individuals involved in the operations.

Mr. Benson promised to turn over to the department for prosecution any new cases of illegal mail openings.

"The Postal Service has the responsibility to do everything within its power to assure that the sanctity of the seal on first-class mail remains inviolate," he told the subcommittee.